

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SMS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05
/093 W

-----016249 310447Z /21

R 300849Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7956
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 9375

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, PDIP, MY, UR, ASEAN
SUBJ: SOVIET ASEAN TALKS; PHAM VAN DONG'S VISIT TO MALAYSIA

REF : A) SINGAPORE 3817, B) KUALA LUMPUR 9089 (NOTAL),
C) KUALA LUMPUR 9041 (NOTAL)

1. FOREIGN MINISTER TENGKU RITHAUDDEEN TOLD REPORTERS AUG 29
THAT MALAYSIA IS ADOPTING A "WAIT AND SEE" ATTITUDE TOWARD
SOVIET OVERTURES FOR A DIALOGUE WITH ASEAN ON THE CONCEPT OF
NEUTRALIZATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. RITHAUDDEEN REFERRED TO CURRENT
RUMORS THAT SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN ASEAN CAPITALS WERE DROPPING
HINTS OF MOSCOW'S NEW POSTURE TOWARDS ASEAN (REFTEL A), BUT
SAID THAT THEUSSR HAS NOT MADE AN OFFICIAL APPROACH TO ANY
ASEAN GOVERNMENT.

2. IN THE SAME TALK WITH REPORTERS RITHAUDDEEN FURTHER DIS-
CUSSED THE CONCEPT OF A ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY
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(ZOPFAN), NOTING THAT THE PRC HAS SHOWN STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE
IDEA, BUT UNTIL RECENTLY THE ATTITUDES OF BOTH MOSCOW AND HANOI
HAVE VARIED FROM HOSTILE TO LUKEWARM. HE SAID THAT THE GOM IS
PREPARED TO LISTEN TO THE VIETNAMESE VIEWS ON ZOPFAN AND IS
PLEASED WITH THE RECENT POSITIVE SRV ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CONCEPT.
RITHAUDDEEN SAID THAT THE PROPOSED OCTOBER VISIT OF SRV PRIME
MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG TO KUALA LUMPUR WILL GIVE THE GOM AN

OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR HANOI'S OFFICIAL VIEWS ON ZOPFAN.

3. COMMENT. WE ARE STILL TRYING TO PIN DOWN THE ORIGIN OF THE RUMORS REGARDING A SOVIET APPROACH TO ASEAN. THE STORY FIRST APPEARED IN AN AUG 23 ARTICLE IN THE NEW STRAITS TIMES AND WAS ATTRIBUTED TO UNNAMED SOURCES. RITHAUDDEEN'S COMMENTS ARE THE FIRST GOM PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE REPORTED SOVIET APPROACH. THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S REMARKS ON PHAM VAN DONG'S VISIT SEEM TO CONFIRM THAT DONG WILL MAKE HIS TRIP TO KUALA LUMPUR IN OCTOBER RATHER THAN SEPTEMBER (REFTEL B). FYI, WE UNDERSTAND THE MALAYSIAN POLICE ARE NOW PREPARING FOR AN OCTOBER VISIT.

MILLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KUALA09375
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780355-0445
Format: TEL
From: KUALA LUMPUR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978089/aaaaahhb.tel
Line Count: 74
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fd4e9a67-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SINGAPORE 3817, 78 KUALA LUMPUR 9089
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1813144
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET ASEAN TALKS; PHAM VAN DONG'S VISIT TO MALAYSIA
TAGS: PEPR, PDIP, MY, UR, ASEAN, (PHAM VAN DONG)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fd4e9a67-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014